

## MALAY PROVERBS.\*

BY W. E. MAXWELL.

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SOME one has happily defined a proverb to be "the wisdom of many and the wit of one." As the embodiment, often in terse epigrammatic form, of certain shrewd bits of worldly wisdom, proverbs are generally popular with the peasantry of every nation; and to judge from the homely metaphors and illustrations to be found in many proverbs, it is from the peasantry that they have usually originated. They are the stock-in-trade of rustic *savans*, who, innocent of any book-knowledge, learn their wisdom from the sea, the sky and the heavenly bodies, from the habits of animals and the qualities of trees, fruits and flowers; or who gather lessons, it may be, of patience, thrift, or courage from incidents of their daily pursuits. To enable us to fully understand the national character of an Eastern people, who have no literature worthy of the name and who are divided from us by race, language, and religion, a study of their proverbs is almost indispensable. An insight is then obtained into their modes of thought, and their motives of action, and, from the principles inculcated, it is possible to form some estimate of what vices they condemn, and what virtues they admire.

In studying the manners and customs of a people, a knowledge of their proverbs is of great assistance. The genius of the Malay language is in favour of neat, pithy sentences, and it abounds, therefore, in these crystallisations, (if the expression can be permitted,) of primitive wisdom and humour, though in this respect it is said to be inferior to the Javanese. Some open up perfect pictures of certain phases of rural life, and indeed are scarcely intelligible except to those whose knowledge of the country and mode of life of the people enables them to appreciate the local colouring. As a proof of their popularity, I may instance the frequent quotation of proverbs in the Malay newspapers which were started in the Colony of last year, and of which no less than three in the native character are now published weekly in Singapore. One can seldom take up the

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\* Only a small portion of the Proverbs are published in this Number of the Journal. The remainder will appear in January.

“*Jawi Perdnakan*” without finding an argument clenched, or an adversary answered by some well known “*ibarat*” (proverb), or “*perupamaan*” (similitude), a dictum of some forgotten sage from which there is no appeal.

To any one studying the language, Malay proverbs are extremely useful, not only because they contain many homely words and phrases not usually to be met with in books, but also as examples of the art of putting ideas into very few words, in which the Malays excel; but which the student, whose thoughts *will* run in a European mould, finds it so difficult to acquire. Newbold, in his “Political and Statistical account of the British Settlements in the Straits of Malacca,” which though published as long ago as 1839, is still by far the most valuable authority on Malay subjects in the English language, gives (vol. II, p. 335.) translations of a few Malay proverbs, but with this exception I am not aware that any collection in our language has hitherto been printed.

I began to collect Malay proverbs in 1874 while residing in Province Wellesley, where there is a large Malay population. The Malay and French dictionary of l'Abbé Favre, which was published in 1875, fell into my hands early last year, and I then found that I had been anticipated in my researches, not only by the learned and reverend author, but also by M. Klinkert, a Dutch gentleman, who, as early as 1863, published a collection of 183 Malay proverbs with a preface and notes in the Dutch language. M. Favre, in his preface, acknowledges his obligations to M. Klinkert's work in the following passage: “C'est ainsi M. Klinkert qui, dans un ouvrage spécial, nous a servi à compléter notre collection de proverbes Malais, extraits partiellement de divers auteurs: nous lui devons aussi les énigmes.” The only copy of M. Klinkert's book which I have seen, a thin pamphlet of 51 pages, does not contain the enigmas mentioned in the foregoing quotation. It is probable therefore that later and more complete editions exist. In the very interesting and modest introduction which precedes M. Klinkert's collection of Malay proverbs, the author states that they are taken partly from the works of Abdullah bin Abdul Kadir Munshi, especially from his “*Hikayat Abdullah*” and his “*Pelayaran*,” and partly, but more rarely, from other “*Hikayat*,” from native “*pantun*,” and from the lips of Malays themselves. For many proverbs in the collection he acknowledges his indebtedness to the late Mr. Keasberry of Singapore, “a man who, from his youth until he became an old man, studied the Malays and their language, and who had the ad-

“vantage of having the above-mentioned Abdullah as his teacher and assistant.”

The author goes on to say that in publishing his small collection of proverbs, got together from these sources, he has a particular aim in view, namely, to encourage other students of the Malay language to complete the collection, by adding to it many proverbs which may exist unknown to him, “lest the study of Malay be neglected for the study of the Javanese language, to which the preference has been given rather too exclusively of late years (in the Dutch colonies).”

As far as Malay authors are concerned, the labours of the Abbé Favre and M. Klinkert in collecting Malay proverbs and aphorisms have, I think, been exhaustive. But there is a wide field left for the student who cares to amuse and instruct himself, and perhaps others, by picking up quaint sayings from the natives themselves. One difficulty, in making a collection of this sort, lies in deciding what to admit as a genuine proverb, and what to reject as a mere sententious remark or as a common metaphorical expression. M. Klinkert admits to a doubt as to whether “a mere phrase” may not here and there be found among the proverbs he publishes. M. Favre certainly gives several specimens in his dictionary which can hardly be considered proverbs, notably those quoted from a “livre de lectures” published in Singapore, which are in some instances mere moral maxims. I shall not pretend, however, in the collection now published, to confine myself to a more rigid rule than that adopted by previous collectors.

In this paper I propose only to supplement previous collections of Malay proverbs, and I shall not, therefore, include any of those which are to be found in Favre’s dictionary, (except perhaps in cases where my version of a phrase differs from his); though I am aware that this rule deprives me of some of the best known and most characteristic specimens. Those now printed have been collected at various times and places. Listening to the humble details of a rural law-suit, or the “simple annals” of a Malay village, I have occasionally picked up some saying alleged to have descended from the “*orang tuah-tuah*” (the ancestors of the speaker) or the “*orang dahulu kala*” (the ancients) deserving of a place here; others I have noted down in conversation with Malays of all grades, from the *raja* to the *ryot*, and have verified by subsequent enquiry; for others again I am indebted to the kindness of friends, Malays and others.

As it has been necessary, in order to avoid reprinting what

has already been published by others, to examine carefully the works of Favre and Klinkert, the compilation of the following pages has involved more labour than their number would suggest. That they have been put together during the very moderate leisure permitted by official occupations will perhaps be an excuse for errors which may be discovered by later students.

1. *Eggang lalu, ranting patah.*

“The hornbill flies past, and the branch breaks.”

A saying often employed when circumstantial evidence seems to encourage suspicion against a person who is really innocent. The hornbill or rhinoceros-bird has a very peculiar flight, and the sound of its wings can be distinctly heard as it flies far overhead.

There are several kinds of hornbills in the Peninsula, and one variety with a very singular note is called by the Malay *tebang mentuak*, a nickname in justification of which the following story is told. A Malay, in order to be revenged on his mother-in-law, shouldered his axe and made his way to the poor woman's house and began to cut through the posts which supported it. After a few steady chops, the whole edifice came tumbling down, and he greeted its fall with a peal of laughter. To punish him for his unnatural conduct, he was turned into a bird and the *tebang mentuak* (feller of mother-in-law) may often be heard in the jungle uttering a series of sharp sounds like the chops of an axe on timber, followed by *Ha, Ha, Ha*.

2. *Ada bras, taroh didalam padi.*

“If you have rice put it away under the un-husked grain.” An injunction to secrecy. An intention to injure any one should be kept secret, otherwise the person concerned may come to know of it and frustrate it.

3. *Ada hujan ada panas*

*Ada hari boleh balas.*

“Now it is wet and now it is fine,  
A day will come for retaliation.”

A proverb for the consolation of the vanquished. As sunshine and rain alternate, so the loser of to-day may be the conqueror of to-morrow. Quickness at resenting an injury has always been held to be a prevailing characteristic of the Malay nature. Newbold (vol. II, p. 186) says that he had seen Malay letters in which, in allusion to the desire of avenging an insult,

such expressions as the following occurred; "I ardently long for his blood to clean my face blackened with charcoal," the original Malay expression (a quotation from the *Sijara Malayu*) is "*membasoh-kan arang yang ter-chonting di-muka.*"

4. *Apa guna-nia merak mengigal di hutan?*

"What is the use of the peacock strutting in the jungle?"

The idea is that the beauty of the bird is thrown away when exhibited only in a lonely spot where there is no one to admire it. In Klinkert's collection there is a proverb conveying a somewhat similar idea, "*Apa-kah guna bulan terang dalam hutan, jikalau dalam negri alangkah baiknia.*"

Why does the moon shine in the forest? Were it not well that her light should be bestowed on inhabited places?

5. *Ada-kah buaya itu menolak-kan bangkei?*

"Will the crocodile reject the carcase?"

Is it likely that a good offer will be refused?

6. *Ayam beruga itu kalau di bri makan di pinggan mas sakatipun ka-utan juga pergi-nia.*

"Though you may feed a jungle-fowl out of a gold plate it will make for the jungle nevertheless."

This is one of many proverbs illustrating the impossibility of eradicating natural habits. Another version is, *upama kijang di rantei dengan mas, jikalau iya lepas, lari juga iya ka hutan makan rumput*, "like a deer secured with a gold chain, which if set free runs off to the forest to eat grass." (Favre). Compare the following which is too elaborate, I fear, for a genuine proverb. It is more like a successful metaphorical effort by some Malay scribe;

7. *Adapun buah pria itu kalau ditanam diatas batas sago dan baja dengan medu, lagi di siram dengan manisan, serta di letak-kan diatas tebu, sakali-pun apabila di masak pahit juga.*

"You may plant the bitter cucumber on a bed of sago, and manure it with honey, and water it with treacle, and train it over sugar canes, but when it is cooked it will still be bitter."

8. *Anak anjing itu bulih-kah jadi anak musang jebat?*

"Can the whelp of a dog become a civet cat?"

The translation, but not the original, is given in Newbold

(vol. II. p. 336.) He explains it to mean that no good is to be expected from persons naturally depraved.

9. *Itek ta'sudu ayam ta'patok.*

"The duck won't have it and the hen won't peck at it." A phrase for something that is utterly worthless, not worth "a brass farthing" or "a tinker's curse"!

10. *Ikut hati mati, ikut rasa binasa.*

"'Tis death to follow one's own will, 'tis destruction to give way to desire." A maxim shewing the folly and immorality of taking one's wishes and feelings as the sole guide of one's actions, irrespective of law and social obligations. This is a good specimen of the jingling effect caused by the juxtaposition of words which rhyme, (an effect which is perhaps more common in Hindustani than in Malay) often met with in Eastern proverbs.

Compare the following Hindustani proverbs.

"*Jiski deg uski teg.*"

"Who has the pot has the sword," (a saying which shews a proper appreciation of the value of an efficient Commissariat), and.

"*Jiske hath dòi, uske hath sab koi.*"

"He who has the spoon has all under his hand."

11. *Adapun ikan yang diam didalam tujuh lantan sakatipun ter-masok didalam pukat juga.*

"Even the fish which inhabit the seventh depth of the sea come into the net sooner or later." Illustration of the inutility of attempting to evade fate.

"*Tujuh lantan*," which I have translated "the seventh depth of the sea," probably refers to the popular Mohamedan idea that "the earth and sea were formed each of seven tiers"—see Newbold, (Vol. II, 360.)

12. *Ada ayer adalah ikan.*

"Wherever there is water there are fish." A second line is sometimes aded to complete the rhyme, but it does not add much to the sense; *Ada rezeki bulih makan*, "if there is nourishment one can eat." The idea intended to be conveyed is one of faith in the bounty of God, who will provide for his creatures wherever they may find themselves.

13. *Ada padang ada bilalang.*

“Wherever there is a field, there are grass-hoppers.” Wherever there is a settlement there is of course population.

14. *Anjing dibri makan nasi, bila akank iniang ?*

“Will a dog ever be satisfied however much rice you may give him?” Kindness is thrown away upon coarse, unmannerly people, who are never satisfied but are always expecting fresh favours.

15. *Ayer tawar sa'chawan di tuang-kan kadilam laut itu bulih-kah menjadi tawar ayer laut itu ?*

“If a cup of fresh water be poured into the sea, will the salt-water become fresh?” A serious offence or a great sin cannot be condoned or wiped out by any trifling means.

16. *Ayam hitam terbang malam,*

*Hinggap di poko pandan ;*

*Berkersah ada rupa-nia tidak.*

“A black fowl which flies at night and settles in the *pandan* bush ; there is a rustling but nothing is to be seen.”

Applied metaphorically to any mysterious case in a Malay court of justice, the details of which are wrapped in obscurity. When it is impossible to get to the bottom of such a case a Malay will remark sententiously that it is “a black fowl whose flight is by night.” On the other hand a case in which the facts are perfectly clear, and the guilt or innocence of the accused is proved to demonstration, is “a white fowl which flies by day,” or, to give the phrase at full length,

17. *Ayam putih terbang siang,*

*Hinggap di halaman ;*

*Malah kepada mata orang yang banyak.*

“A white fowl which flies in broad day-light and alights in the court-yard, full in the sight of all the people.”

18. *Apa lagi sawa iya berkahandak ayam lah.*

“Of course the boa-constrictor wants the fowl.” Applies to a certain class of persons who are contented enough as long as they get everything they require.

19. *Bukan tanah menjadi padi.*

“Earth does not become grain.” Another proverb illustrative of the hopelessness of attempting to elevate the worthless.

“You cannot make a silk purse out of a sow’s ear.”

20. *Bongkokbharu betul, buta bharu chelik.*

“The hunchback has become straight, and the blind has recovered his sight.” A very common proverb, used ironically of a man who has risen from obscurity to a good position, and in his prosperity turns his back on his old friends.

21. *Begimana bunyi gendang, begitulah tari-nya.*

“As is the cadence of the tabor, so must the measure of the dance be.” The idea intended to be conveyed is, I believe, that a man has to regulate his conduct according to the orders he gets from his superiors. As the step has to be adapted to the music, so the influence of those in power necessarily affects the conduct of their subordinates. Among the Malays, as among other Eastern nations, a small drum beaten by the hands is a prominent feature in all musical entertainments. Two kinds in common use are called *gendang* and *rabana*. Sometimes the time (in dancing) is marked by clapping the hands (*tepuk*) or striking two pieces of bamboo together (*kerchap*).

A common version of this proverb is “*Begimana tepuk lugitu tari.*”

22. *Bunga dipetek, perdu ditendang.*

“The flower is plucked, the stalk trampled under foot.” To take the sweet and leave the sour. Said of a man who ill-treats his mother-in-law.

23. *Bumi mana yang tiada kena hujan.*

“Were is the spot on the earth that does not get moistened by rain?”

There is no mortal who does not commit sin at some time or other. A common repartee of Malay wives scolded for some short-coming; it amounts to “I’m no worse than anybody else. “every one must do wrong sometimes.”

24. *Burong terbang dipipis lada.*

“To grind pepper for a bird on the wing.” One of the first processes of Malay cookery is to grind up the spices, etc. with which the dish is to be seasoned. The proverb ridicules making preparations for the disposal of something not yet in one’s power. It is strongly suggestive of the old injunction “first catch your hare.”

25. *Bergantung tiada bertali.*

“To hang without a rope.” To be without visible means of support; e. g. a Malay woman, deserted but not divorced by her husband, who cannot remarry and has no one to support her.



26. *Berklahi didalam mimpi.*

“To fight in a dream.” To take trouble for nothing.

27. *Bunga pun gugor, puteh pun gugor, tuah pun gugor, masak pun gugor.*

“The flowers fall and so must all things fair, the old drop off and the fully ripe.” Death is the common lot of everything.

28. *Buat baik ber-páda-páda, buat jahat jangan sakali.*

“Do good in moderation, do not do evil at all.” Excessive goodness is apt to exasperate the rest of mankind. It is enough to be tolerably good, and to avoid doing anything actually wicked. Thus the Malay moralist.

29. *Bertitah lalu sembah ber laku.*

“The royal command is waived and the petition is allowed to prevail.”

A common expression at the Court of a Malay raja, when the sovereign, allowing himself to be influenced by representations humbly made to him, recalls his words, and graciously suffers the suggestions of his chiefs, or the prayers of a suppliant, to prevail.

30. *Ber-tangga naik ber-jenjing turun.*

“To ascend by climbing a ladder and to come down with the hands full.” The trouble and difficulty of climbing up to the notice of people in high places are repaid by the substantial favours to be got from them.

31. *Bapa-nya burik anak-nya tentu-lah ber-rintek.*

“If the father is spotted the son will certainly be speckled,” “like father like son.”

32. *Ber-kilat ikan didalam ayer aku sudah tahu jantan betina-nya.*

“As the lightning flashes on the fish in the water, I can tell the males from the females.” Means “what is the use of attempting concealment? I can read your secret with the greatest ease.”

33. *Berhakim kepada brok.*

“To make the monkey judge,” or, to go to the monkey for justice.” A fable is told by the Malays of two men one of whom planted bananas on the land of the other. When the fruit was ripe each claimed it, but not being able to come to any settlement they referred the matter to the arbitration of a monkey (of the large

kind called *brok*.) The judge decided that the fruit must be divided, but no sooner was this done than one of the suitors complained that the other's share was too large. To satisfy him the monkey reduced the share of the other by the requisite amount which he ate himself. Then the second suitor cried out that the share of the first was now too large. It had to be reduced to satisfy him, the subtracted portion going to the monkey as before. Thus they went on wrangling until the whole of the fruit was gone and there was nothing left to wrangle about. Malay judges, if they are not calumniated, have been known to protract proceedings until both sides have exhausted their means in bribes. In such cases the unfortunate suitors are said to *berhakim kapada brok*.

34. *Tanam tebu di bibir mulut.*

"To plant sugar cane on the lips." To cultivate a plausible manner concealing under it a false heart.

35. *Tiada akan pisang berbuah dua kali.*

"The plantain does not bear fruit twice." A hint to importunate people, who, not satisfied with what has been given to them, ask for more.

36. *Tiadalah gajah yang begitu besar diam didalam hutan rimba itu dapat ka-tangan manusia?*

"Does not the elephant, whose size is so great and which inhabits the recesses of the forest, fall into the hands of mankind?" A sententious reflection on the superiority of mind to matter, intellect to brute force.

37. *Tanam lalang ta'kan tumbok padi.*

"If you plant *lalang* grass you will not get a crop of rice." A man must expect to reap as he sows.

38. *Tangan menetak bahu memikul.*

"The hand is chopping (wood) while the shoulder is bearing a load." Said of a man who makes money in several ways or who has various employments.

39. *Tu-kan har'ian makan anak-nya.*

"The tiger will not eat its own cubs."

The Raja will not order the death of one of his own children.

I do not know how to reconcile this proverb with a statement in Major McNair's book, "Sarong and Kris," (p. 124) that "the male tiger devours his own offspring whenever he

has an opportunity," except by presuming that the Malay author of the proverb alludes to the female tiger!

40. *Tidak hujan lagi bichak inikan pula hujan.*

"Muddy enough when there is no rain, but now it is raining." Said of a thing difficult to perform at any time without the addition of an aggravating circumstance.

41. *Ta' tumbuh ta' melata*

*Ta' sunggoh orang ta' kata.*

"A plant must sprout before it climbs; if it were not true people would not say it." "No smoke without fire."

42. *Tiada baba'n batu di galas.*

"For want of a load a stone is carried on the back." To give one's self needless trouble.

43. *Tolak tangga ber-ayun kaki.*

"Kick away the ladder and the legs are left swinging." To be in an unpleasant position in consequence of a blunder of one's own.

Sometimes another line is added.

*Pelok tuboh mengajar diri.*

"Then you fold your arms and think what a fool you're been" (*lit, to hug the body and lecture one's self*).

This phrase is common in Malay *pantun*, e. g. the following allusion to the bad management of a Malay lover who abandoned a dark beauty for a fair one and got neither;

*"Itam lepas puteh ta' dapat.*

*Tolak tangga ber-ayun kaki."*

Klinkert has this proverb in his collection but gives it as "*Tolak-kam tangga kaki berayun.*"

44. *Ta sunggoh saluwang me-laut balik iya ka tepi juga.*

"The *saluwang* fish does not really go out to sea, it always returns to the bank."

A hit at stay-at-home people who never leave their own villages.

The *saluwang* is a small fresh-water fish, very common in the Perak river.

45. *Ta' ampang peluru di lalang.*

A bullet is not stopped by the *lalang* grass. The weak can oppose but the feeblest barriers to the attacks of the powerful.

46. *Tiada ter-kajang batu di pulau.*

"The rocks on an island are not to be covered over with *kajang* awnings." There must be a limit to benevolence; one man cannot feed a province. *Kajang*, a kind of mat or screen made of palm-leaves sewn together, often used as an awning or tarpaulin.

47. *Tu'kan sre'k luka makan ditajak, esok ka bindang juga kita.*

A cut with a *tajak* is not so serious but that we are able to go to the fields again next day. The *tajak* is an instrument with which the first process in *padi* cultivation, namely clearing the ground of the long grass and reeds which have grown up since the last crop was taken off, is performed. It consists of a heavy iron blade attached, at right angles nearly, to a wooden handle. Weight is necessary, as the grass is thick and strong and its roots are under water. A certain amount of dexterity is required, or the operator may cut his own feet. The proverb, which is common among Malay peasants in Perak, means something of this kind: "What is the use of being sulky because our Chief or Punghulu has punished or injured us? We have to till his fields for him all the same whether we like it or not."

*Ter-klébat-klébat seperti lintah lapar.*

"Waving about like a hungry leech." A simile applied to Malay damsels who shew a want of maidenly propriety.

48. *Tumaa hilang malu halóba dapat kabinasa-an.*

"Covetousness begets loss of shame, avarice results in destruction."

Favre, quoting *Hikayat Abdullah* gives *loba*, not *halóba*, as the Malay word for *covetousness*, (Dict. vol. 2. p. 537.) I give the word as I have been accustomed to hear it pronounced, after having consulted several Malays of education.

Another Malay word, signifying "miserly, avaricious" is *chikel*. I have not found this in any dictionary, though Favre (quoting Klinkert) gives *kikel*.

49. *Tiada bulih telinga, tandok di púlas-kan.*

"As he can't twist the ear he pulls at the horn." "By hook or by crook."

To illustrate the way in which this proverb is used I may mention that I once heard it quoted, in a country police court in Province Wellesley, by an old Malay who was asked for his defence to a certain charge. He declared it to be a second attempt on the part of his adversary to injure him, a former one having failed; and he wound up his speech with "*telinga ta' dapat pulas dia handak pulas tandok*", (if he can't wring me by the ear he is determined to have me by the horn).

50. *Ter-lepas deri-pada mulut budya masok mulut har'iman.*

"Freed from the mouth of the crocodile only to fall into the jaws of the tiger."

This proverb and the next suggest at once the familiar English one "Out of the frying pan into the fire."

51. *Takut-kan hantu pelok-kan bangkei.*

"From fear of the ghost, to clasp the corpse."

52. *Jangan sangat pilih-nya takut tuan kena buku bulu.*

"Do not pick and choose too nicely or you may chance to get a bamboo knot." The knot or joint of the bamboo, or of the sugarcane, is a symbol among the Malays of anything that is quite worthless and can be turned to no good account. The proverb means that a man who is very hard to please may have to put up with an inferior article in the end.

53. *Járas katania rága járang.*

"The creel says that the basket is coarsely plaited." "Yet," as I have heard a Malay say, "*haluia jaras pun jarang juga*," "the creel, too, has wide interstices," a commentary which fully explains the proverb. It corresponds closely with the familiar English proverb about the pot which called the kettle black.

54. *Jangan kamu sangkakan kapal api besi itu pun masok guri juga.*

"Do not imagine otherwise, even an iron steamer has to go into dock." A warning not to suppose that anything is so strong and solid as to be beyond the reach of injury or decay.

55. *Janganlah tuan-tuan pikir kalau tebu itu bengkok manis itu pun bengkok juga.*

"Do not suppose, my masters, that because a sugar cane is crooked its sweet juice is equally crooked!" A good thing is none the worse for having come from a bad person; or, a repulsive exterior does not prove that there is nothing good within.

56. *Jong pechah yu sarat.*

“When the junk is wrecked the shark has his fill.” It is an ill wind that blows no one any good.

57. *Chikil berhabis lapuk bertedoh.*

“The last degree of stinginess is to leave the mould (mildew) undisturbed.”

58. *Diam ubi lagi kintal*

*Diam besi lagi sentil.*

“The yam remains still and increases in bulk; iron lies quiet and wastes away the more.” Another version of the same proverb is “*Diam ubi berisi, diam besi ber-karat-karat.*”

The meaning is easily gathered from the following passage from the *Hikayat Abdullah* (p. 245): “*Maka diam-lah iya (Tuan Raffles) bahwa bukan-nia diam penggali berkarat, melainkan diam ubi adanya berisi.*” “Mr. Raffles remained silent, but his silence was not that of the spade which lies rusting, but that of the yam which is adding to its contents.” Favre in his dictionary (*tit. gali*) seems to have somewhat misunderstood this passage.

59. *Di chobit paha kanan kiri pun sakit juga.*

“If the right thigh is pinched pain will also be felt in the left.” A man may be made to suffer by something done to a near relation. In Malay countries it is common to influence a man by threats of injury to his family; absconding criminals and slaves are sometimes induced to return and surrender themselves by the knowledge that their wives and children or other near relations have been seized and are undergoing ill treatment.

60. *Di tepuk tangan kanan tiada akan membunyi.*

“To clap hands with the right hand only will not produce any sound.” The combined action of both parties to an agreement is necessary, if it is to be carried out properly. If one is willing, and the other unwilling, no result will be produced.